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I did not attend the Knob Creek meeting, but based on what I encountered at the Reno meeting and the reports I have received, the outcome was about what I expected.

At the risk of being repetitious, a major part of the problem is that most of the activists in this movement are still unclear on several key concepts, most of which I covered in the Texas Militia Papers, available on our site, which were issued beginning in March, 1994. The points made there are not idle philosophizing. They have very real implications for action, and without a firm understanding of them disasters like Knob Creek are all too predictable.

First, to be successful such a meeting needs to have a specific agenda to which all participants are committed. That means they must not go there seeking to vent their emotions or to find sweeping solutions to every problem. The task of any meeting should be to solve a specific solvable problem, that is, a problem that can be solved during the meeting with only the personnel and resources the participants bring to the meeting. Any discussion of what someone not present should do should be ruled out of order. Likewise any discussion of resources the participants don't have and probably can't get.

As J.J. Johnson has suggested, one such task might be to work out a system of communications. Even that is probably too large a task for such a meeting, especially if it hasn't been solved at the local level first.

Second, it is useless to argue about who is an infiltrator or provocateur. Despite the claims by some that there are reliable ways to identify such persons, experience proves otherwise. As I pointed out in 1994, the way to deal with them is to conduct all activities in a way that assumes they are

present but makes no difference if they are. None of us should be saying or doing anything that we don't want the world to know or that would cast us on anything but high moral ground, and we need to recruit such vast numbers and have so many units that no infiltration effort can possibly cover them all.

Third, we need to drop ridiculously pretentious names like "theater command". What we need are committees of safety, elected locally by public elections as we did in the Southern Region of Texas, and committees of correspondence to link all the committees of safety together. No attempt at anything like a centralized command structure should even be contemplated at this stage.

Fourth, the militia needs to be kept strictly separated from political activities. That is not to say that political activities, including lobbying, electioneering, litigation, and public education, should not be a part of the daily activity of every militiaman, but the term "militia" should not be associated with such activities, which should be limited to organizing, training, and operations for defense, riot control, criminal investigation, and emergency response.

It should be pointed out that, while the militia movement as a whole has had a degree of success in making people aware that there are problems with constitutional compliance, and in getting law enforcement to think twice about confronting large, armed groups, the main real success from any militia operation was the exposure of the Good 'Ol Boys Roundup back in 1995. We need to focus on building a record of success at investigating and exposing high-level wrongdoing. That is what will bring us the public support that we need to accomplish the other things we want to do.

Militia training needs to focus on criminal investigation. There is no lack of opportunity to practice it, which should go a long way to keeping people busy and interested and in building local participation.

--Jon

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